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Whereas the Kings most excellent Majesty, upon the request of the Lords and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by and with their advice and consent, considering the lamentable and distressed condition of his good subjects in the Kingdom of Ireland; (that there might be a generall Humiliation of all the Estates of this Kingdom before Almighty God in Fasting and Prayer) was graciously pleased to command the keeping of a Monethly Fast; and to the end that all persons might the better take notice thereof (and to leave such without excuse, as should not duly keep and observe the same) did afterwards by his Proclamation of the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1641. appoint that the same should be generally, publickly, and solemnly holden, and kept, as well by abstinence from food, as by publick prayers, preaching, and hearing of the Word of God, and other Religious and holy duties, in all Cathedrals, Collegiate, and Parish Churches, and Chappels, within the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales, (Without any exception) on the last Wednesday of every Moneth, to continue during the troubles in the said Kingdom of Ireland: All which his Majesty did straightly charge and command, should be reverently and devoutly performed by all his Subjects, as they desire the blessing of Almighty God, and would avoid his heavy indignation against this Land and people; and upon pain of such punishments as may justly be inflicted upon all such as shall contemne or neglect so Religious a Work and duty.

And Whereas the Lords and Commons in both Houses of Parliament, have received divers informations from severall parts of this Kingdom and Dominion of Wales, of the great neglect of the due observation and keeping of the said Fast upon the dayes appointed, and of the profanations of the same, by many irreligious, ill affected, loose, and scandalous persons, as well of the Clergie as others, who are so far from afflicting their soules, and loosing the bands of wickedness, as that they provoke the Wrath of Almighty God, and make so pious a meanes to procure his blessings, the occasion of greater Judgements.

For the prevention whereof for the time to come, the Lords and Commons do order, declare, ordain, that in all and every the Cathedrals, Collegiate, and Parish Churches, and Chappels within the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales, (Without any exception) upon every Lords day, next and immediately before any the dayes appointed for the said publick Fast, the Parson, Vicar, Curate, or Minister, that upon that day shall Officiate, or exercise in any of the said Cathedrals, Collegiate, Parish Churches or Chappels, shall give publick notice in every of the said Cathedrals, Collegiate, Parish Churches or Chappels respectively, of the Fast day next ensuing, immediately after Sermon, or prayer ended in the forenoon, before the Congregation be dismissed, earnestly exhorting and perswading all the people to the solemn due keeping and religious observation of the whole day appointed for the said Fast, and that they would repair to some Church or Chappell, there diligently and reverently to attend all such holy duties as shall be used in the observance of the same; that they forbear to use all manner of sports and pastimes whatsoever, and their ordinary Trades and Callings upon the said day, as well Carriers, Wagoners, Carters, Waymen, Drovers, Butchers, Hucksters, Shop-keepers, Labourers; or any others using any Art, Trade, Mystery or manuell Occupation whatsoever, and that all Vintners, Taverners, Ale house-keepers, and Keepers of Victualling-houses, do forbear to keep open their doores, Bulks, or Shops, or to sell or utter (except in cases of extream necessity) any Wine, Beere, Ale, or Victuall, till the publick exercises and religious duties of that day in the respective Cathedrals, Collegiate, Parish Churches and Chappels be past and over.

And lastly, all and every the Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Bayliffs, Constables, Churchwardens, & other officers inhabiting or residing within the limits or precincts of any such Cathedral, Collegiate, Parish Church or Chappel, are hereby required to take speciall notice as well of such Parson, Vicar, Curate, or other Minister that ought to Officiate in any of the said Cathedrals, Collegiate, and Parish Churches or chappels, upon any such day appointed for the said Fast, that shall either refuse or neglect to do the same, or not do or cause the same to be done in that religious & solemn maner as it ought to be, or that shall refuse to give notice of the Fast day at the time and in manner as aforesaid, and forthwith to return their names and the names of all such (from time to time) as shall wilfully offend herein, in contempt of the Lawes, his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament, unto some one or more of the Knights, Citizens, or Burgeses that serve for the county where such offence is, or shall be committed, that some speedy course may be taken for the severe punishing of such as shall offend herein according to the Lawes.

Die Mercurii, 22 Aug. 1642. Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That this Ordinance be forthwith printed and published:  
H: Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

24. April. 1643.

Whereas the Lords and Commons in Parliament have made an Ordinance for the more strict and solemn keeping of the dayes of publick Fast, which are not by all persons duly observed, even in these times of publick calamity, to the great dishonour of God, and the contempt of the Authority of both Houses of Parliament. Now that more particular notice may be given unto all such as shall offend herein, before any exemplary punishment be inflicted upon them; It is ordered by the Commons now Assembled in Parliament, That all Constables (or their Deputies) shall the day before every publick Fast, repair to every House within their severall and respective liberties, and charge all persons, That they strictly observe the Fast, according to the directions in the said Ordinance.

And they shall upon the said dayes of the publick Fast, walk through their said liberties, diligently searching for, and taking notice of all persons, who either by following their work of their calling, or sitting in Taverns, Victualling or Alehouses, or any other ways shall not duly observe the same; And they are hereby required to return the Names of all such persons as they shall finde so offending, as also such Informations as they shall receive against any other persons within their liberties, guilty of the like offence unto the Committee for Examinations, that so they may be proceeded against for the contempt of the said Ordinance; And all Constables are to observe these directions from time to time, so long as the said publick Fast shall be kept, without expecting any further Order.

H: Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.